



## Speeches / Lectures

### Address and Interaction with the students of Minneapolis

[ At Sri Venkateshwara Temple, May 23 2013 ]

***"When you wish upon a star,  
Makes no difference who you are  
Anything your heart desires  
Will come to you"***

I am delighted to address and interaction with the students of Minneapolis Area Indian Community at Sri Venkateswara Temple. This beautiful temple was created by the creative minds of Shri Madhu Reddy and his wife Jyotsna and other indian community members. My greetings to Mr. Madhu Reddy and his wife Jyotsna and other indian community members assembled here. I greet the students, [teachers](#), special invitees and distinguished guests from different walks of life.

When I see many young friends, today I would like to assert that "No youth today need to fear about the future". How? The ignited mind of the youth is the most powerful resource on the earth, under the earth and above the earth. If you have a great aim in life, continuously acquire the knowledge, work hard with confidence to win and have the confidence to defeat problems and succeed with righteous heart, you will definitely succeed in all your missions, it does not matter who you are. Today I would like to share few thoughts on "**What I will be remembered for?**".

#### **Criteria for achievement for youth**

Dear friends, When I see you young friends, I thought of sharing an ancient poem and modified to suit the occasion. Can you all repeat with me?

#### **Wings to Fly**

I am born with potential.  
I am born with goodness and trust.  
I am born with ideas and dreams.  
I am born with greatness.  
I am born with confidence.  
I am born with wings.  
I am not meant for crawling,  
So I won't, I have wings,  
I will fly, fly and fly"

My message to you, young friends, is that education gives you wings to fly.

Achievement comes out of fire in our sub-conscious mind that "I will win". So, each one of you assembled here and elsewhere, will have "Wings of Fire". The Wing of Fire will indeed lead to knowledge which will make you to fly as a Doctor, or an Engineer, or a scientist, or a [teacher](#), or a political leader, or a bureaucrat or a diplomat or anything you want to be.

How does achievement come? There are four proven steps; having an aim in life before 20 years of age, acquiring knowledge continuously, hard work towards the aim and perseverance to defeat the problem and succeed. Now you know, how the unique personalities got evolved and also you realize how to transform yourself into unique you. And above all, what you need a will [power](#) and confidence, that you can achieve great deeds.

### Can you transform "Unique You"

**Nine achievers:** Dear friends, Look up, what do you see, the light, the electric [bulbs](#). Immediately, our thoughts go to the inventor **Thomas Alva Edison**, for his unique contribution towards the invention of electric bulb and his electrical lighting system.

When you hear the sound of aeroplane going over your house, whom do you think of? **Wright Brothers** proved that man could fly, of-course at heavy risk and cost.

Whom does the telephone remind you of? Of course, **Alexander Graham Bell**.

When everybody considered a sea travel as an experience or a voyage, a unique person questioned during his sea travel from United Kingdom to India. He was pondering on why the horizon where the sky and sea meet looks blue? His research resulted in the phenomena of scattering of light. Of course, **Sir CV Raman** was awarded Nobel [Prize](#).

Do you know an Indian Mathematician who did not have formal higher education but had inexhaustible spirit and love for mathematics which took him to contribute to the treasure houses of mathematical research ? some of which are still under serious study and engaging all-available world mathematicians? efforts to establish formal proofs? He was a unique Indian genius who could melt the heart of the most hardened and outstanding Cambridge mathematician Prof G H Hardy. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that it was Prof. Hardy who discovered a great mathematician for the world. This mathematician was of-course **Srinivasa Ramanujan** for whom every number was a divine manifestation.

Do you know the scientist who is famous for Chandra Limit which describes the maximum mass ( $\sim 1.44$  solar masses) of a white dwarf star, or equivalently, the minimum mass for which a star will ultimately collapse into a neutron star to black hole following a supernova. Two of his students got the Nobel Prize before him. It is of-course the famous Nobel Laureate **Chandrasekhar Subramaniam**.

Friends, there was a great scientific lady who is known for discovering Radium. She won not one, but two Nobel Prizes, one for physics and another for chemistry. Who is she? She is **Madam Curie**. Madam Curie discovered radium and she was doing research on the effect of radiation on human system. The same radiation which she discovered, affected her and she sacrificed her life for removing the pain of human life.

Do you know about a great human being with a spirit of service, who also won a Nobel Prize for her contributions? She said and practiced, "Give, give and give, until it hurts". She is **Mother Teresa**.

When I described to you young friends, these historical eight events, you all jumped. The scientist, technologist and great human being, who created the event, are unique personalities. Young friends, can you join such unique performers of scientific history? Yes, you can. Definitely, you can. Let us study together, how it can be made possible?

Friends, I have, so far, met 13 million youth in a decade's time. I learnt, **"every youth wants to be unique, that is, YOU! But the world all around you, is doing its best, day and night, to make you just "everybody else"**. At home, dear young friends, you are asked by your parents to be like neighbours' children for scoring good marks. When you go to school, your teacher says "why not you become like the first five rankers in the class". Wherever you go, they are saying "you have to be somebody else or everybody else". Now, dear young friends, how many of you would like to be unique yourself.

***The challenge, my young friends, is that you have to fight the hardest battle, which any human being can ever imagine to fight; and never stop fighting until you arrive at your destined place, that is, a UNIQUE YOU! Friends what will be your tools to fight this battle, what are they: have a great aim in life, continuously acquire the knowledge, work hard and persevere to realize the great achievement.***

Now dear friends, how many of you feel confident that you will and will become an unique personality in your specialization and a great national leader with ethics. Let me share with you three experiences, that will lead you to think with confidence, act with confidence and succeed with confidence.

### **How to make impossible possible?**

Dear students, it is said, *"History has proven that those who dare to imagine the impossible are the ones who break all human limitations. In every field of human endeavor, whether science, medicine, sports, the arts, or technology, the names of the people who imagined the impossible and achieved are engraved in our history. By breaking the limits of their imagination, they changed the world."*

Let us see a few creative minds who made impossible possible by their indomitable

spirit. Human flight is nothing but creativity of human mind and it undergoes several struggles to achieve excellence. In 1895, a great well-known scientist Lord Kelvin, who was the President of Royal Society of London said, **"anything heavier than air cannot fly, and cannot be flown."** Within a decade, Wright Brothers proved man could fly in 1903.

On the successful completion of Moon Mission in 1969, Von Braun, a very famous rocket designer, who built Saturn-V, to launch the capsule with astronauts and made moon walk a reality, in 1975 said **"If I am authorized, I will remove the word impossible"**.

In ancient days, Ptolemaic astronomy is a widely used system in calculating the dynamics of various stars and planets. Assumption by then was that the earth is flat. What a scientific struggle had to take place to prove that the earth is spherical in shape orbiting around the sun. The three great astronomers Copernicus, Galileo and Kepler had to give a new dimension to the world of astronomy. Today we take it for granted that earth is a globe, orbiting around the sun, and the sun orbits in the Milky Way. **All the technological advancements we have today are the outcome of scientific exploration of scientists of earlier centuries. At no time, man was beaten by problems.** He strives continuously to subjugate impossibility and then succeeds.

Dear friends, what lessons do we learn from all these achievements? According to the laws of aerodynamics the bumble bee should never be able to fly. Because of the size, weight, and shape of its body in relationship to the total wing span, flying is scientifically impossible. The bumble bee, being ignorant of scientific theory, goes ahead and flies anyway. Because it wants to fly and it is flying. I would like the youth assembled here to take a lesson from these examples and work to make everything possible, because they are unique.

### **My Rameswaram School**

When I see you all in such a beautiful environment, I thought of recalling my school days in British India in Rameswaram Panchayat Primary School during the period 1936-1944. This school is situated near the seashore, half built and half thatched and it was the only school in Rameswaram Island in those days. We were 400 boys and girls. I would like to narrate my experience, what I felt in my school which had an unimpressive building and scanty amenities. But I used to see an interesting scene in the school. The teachers, particularly the History & Geography and Science teachers were loved by the students, for the reason, the teacher loved their teaching and ensured the growth of every one of the 55 students in my class. My History & Geography teacher Shri Kaliswara Iyer used to say, "O my students, my teaching mission is to ensure that you children love History & Geography, so that you score good marks apart from learning with pleasure." Whereas my science teacher Shri Sivasubramania Iyer was a big attraction to all the students in the class. When the science teacher entered in the class in the morning, we saw in him the light of knowledge radiating. We saw the light of purity shining, in our teachers.

We were 55 students in the 8th class. Even if one student was absent for a day, our teachers will go to the parents and enquire about the student's welfare and the reason for his not coming to the school. If a student gets high marks, teacher will be the first person to go to our home and share the information with our parents. My school was a happy school. All the 55 of my class mates went through and completed 8th class. I don't remember even a single drop out. The message I would like to give this audience is, it is not the great building or a great facility or great advertisements gives quality, but loveable education and great teachers do. Education cannot be a business product or system. Education at the primary level has to be delivered in an integrated way by great teachers through great syllabus and promoting affinity between the parents, students and the teachers.

### **Mission in life : I can do it**

Dear young friends, knowledge will empower you to undertake great missions. While entering into such type of mission in life, you need unique traits for achieving success in your missions which will require extra ordinary courage and the ability to dream big which will help overcome all obstacles. I would like to give an example of a visually challenged young boy, who was not deterred by his physical challenge.

Friends, when I was the President of India, I met the group of tribal students from Lead India 2020 movement on 28 Aug 2006. I asked all of them one question: "What you want to become?" Out of many responses, one visually challenged boy studying IX class got up. His name is Srikanth, he answered me "I will become the first visually Challenged President of India". I was very happy to see his vision and ambition. Small aim is a crime. Hence, I congratulated him to realize his vision and told him to work for realizing the vision.

Thereafter he worked hard and got 90% in Xth class and 96 % in intermediate and he set a goal to study Engineering in MIT, Boston USA. His relentless hard work not only secured seat but he got full fee waiver from MIT, Boston. Srikanth's achievement has brought changes in many change agents of Lead India 2020 and inspired to set high vision. The training he took under the initiative of Lead India 2020 has set a high vision for him. Seeing this impact of Lead India 2020 training, Lead India 2020 movement and GE volunteers have funded Mr. Srikanth for his travel to USA. Today he is pursuing his studies at MIT, Boston. When the GE offered him a job on his completion of graduation, he told them that he would certainly come back to GE, if he couldn't become the President of India. What a confidence that boy has amidst of difficulty and the challenges in his life by being visually challenged.

Recently, when I met the physically challenged students meet organised by Tamilnadu Govt and Lead India 2020 at Coimbatore, I had a chance to meet Mr. Srikanth and his teacher who brought him up. I found in him, he is doing 4th year in his graduation of B.S Computer Science and Management. Within these 4 years, he has started one company which produces consumer packaging items using bio-degradable materials and other social initiative that he started is a skill

development training center for the youth. He gave an extempore speech on how to overcome the disability and to have a strong mind and will power to overcome the challenges and succeed. That is the power of Lead India 2020 training for igniting the minds of the youth to achieve higher academic performance and also adopt value system in their life.

Now, let me share three incidents which I experienced many years ago in Ahmadabad and 5 years back and now.

### **When can I sing a song of India?**

Dear friends, the India Vision 2020 definitely inspires everyone, particularly the youth of the nation. I am experiencing this whenever I interact with the youth. I recall a situation in early 1990, when I was interacting with the youth in this city. One girl asked me "When I can sing a song of India?" The same spirit echoed everywhere during that time. But for the last 3 years, while interacting with the youth I could hear a different voice - "what can I give it to the nation?" But now, for the last few months, I have seen the transformation from the ignited minds of the youth, the spirit of "I can do it". What a great transformation which I have seen in the ignited minds of the youth and also from the experienced people of India. So the boundary conditions for development are in place. I am sure, dear friends, definitely you can become partner in the national development with the message that "I can do it", "We can do it" and "India can do it".

### **Conclusion**

Friends, finally I would like to ask you, **what would you like to be remembered for?** You have to evolve yourself and shape your life. You should write it on a page. That page may be a very important page in the book of human history. And you will be remembered for creating that one page in the history of the nation ? whether that page is the page of invention, the page of innovation or the page of discovery or the page of creating societal change or a page of removing the poverty or the page of finding new technologies in energy or astronomy. I will be happy if you could write this page and mail it to me (apj@abdukkalam.com).

With these words, I greet all the students of Minneapolis Area Indian community to achieve success in their mission of education and youth to realize their inner potential and maximize their creativity.

May God Bless you.

### **Oath for the Youth**

1. I will have a goal and work hard to achieve that goal. I realize that small aim is a crime.
2. I will work with integrity and succeed with integrity.
3. I will be a good member of my family, a good member of the society, a good member of the nation and a good member of the world.

4. I will always try to save or better someone's life, without any discrimination of caste, creed, language religion or state. Wherever I am, a thought will always come to my mind. That is "What can I give?"

5. I will always protect and enhance the dignity of every human life without any bias.

6. I will always remember the importance of time. My motto will be "Let not my winged days, be spent in vain".

7. I will always work for clean home, clean planet Earth and clean energy.

8. As a youth of my nation, I will work and work with courage to achieve success in all my tasks and enjoy the success of others.

9 I am as young as my faith and as old as my doubt. Hence, I will light up then, the lamp of faith in my heart.

10. My National Flag flies in my heart and I will bring glory to my nation.

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